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Seventeenth Session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ELEVEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH PLenary MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 8 October 1962, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Muhammad Qasrulla KHAN (Pakistan)

1. Address by H.E. Dr. Oswaldo Lurticós, President of the Republic of Cuba
2. General debate 197 (continued)

A statement was made by:

Mr. Shearer (Jamaica)

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ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. OSVALDO DORTICÓS, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA

The PRESIDENT: I invite His Excellency Dr. Osvaldo Dorticós, President of the Republic of Cuba, to address the General Assembly.

His Excellency Dr. Osvaldo DORTICOS (President of the Republic of Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My first words must be words of congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to the high post that you occupy in the General Assembly.

I also wish most enthusiastically and warmly to welcome the admission to membership in the United Nations of the new States that thus begin on the great adventure of national independence, namely, Rwanda, Burundi, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

May I anticipate matters somewhat and also extend our tribute and offer our welcome to the great nation that will very soon enter this Organization: Algeria, which with its admission to membership crowns a lengthy period of strife and struggle for independence, an independence whose achievement doubtless gives the most obvious proof of the fact that we are at present, with great historic fortune for us, contemplating the end of the era of colonialism and oppression of peoples.

I think that we are in duty bound also to express the appreciation and gratitude of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba to the representatives who have with great warmth, support, and profound understanding mentioned our country in the statements they have made in the General Assembly. May I express my gratitude to those who have raised their voices here in defence of the legitimate rights of our people.

(President Portico)

I wish also to thank those who, without mentioning the name of my country, have supported with warmth and conviction the principles that must form the basis of the entire matter of self-determination of peoples, those principles which must be opposed to any kind of foreign intervention in the future of peoples and their decisions.

This session of the General Assembly is taking place in the midst of the speeding up of preparations for a nuclear war. It is taking place in the midst of an increase of the flow of propaganda for a preventive nuclear war. It is true that we can, with satisfaction and pleasure, note some encouraging signs despite these depressing circumstances. The solution of the problem of Laos, the agreement on West Irian, the independence of new States are all truly great events that nourish our hopes. But, unfortunately, along with these encouraging signs, we must also note that, as on previous occasions, this session of the Assembly is confronted with rare dramatic circumstances which point to grave danger to international peace, and it is those problems concerning -- and, therefore, the questions of disarmament and of the cessation of nuclear tests, the liquidation of colonialism and of all types of oppression -- that constitute the important and essential problems on which the Assembly must focus its attention.

On more than one occasion in the past Cuba has clearly made known its position on each of these questions which are to be discussed at this session of the Assembly. Our Prime Minister made Cuba's position clear on these matters at the fifteenth regular session. Today, as then, we stress once again our concern in all the activities, conduct or agreements that may or can assist in the achievement of general and complete disarmament, not only because this will ultimately lead to the liquidation of the material possibilities of war, but also because, as many speakers have stated in this Assembly, it will permit the utilization of the vast resources which will be liberated through disarmament in the economic and cultural development of all countries of the world, especially the under-developed regions.

(President Dorticos)

Our viewpoint is also clear cut regarding the cessation and the prohibition of all nuclear tests, in the atmosphere, in the stratosphere, under water and underground.

So far as my country is concerned, since it has an open economy dependent to a large extent on international trade, as well as for basic reasons of principle, we advocate the widest freedom of trade and we are ready to support the holding of an international trade conference that will study and adopt measures and agreements that will abolish those things which today limit free trade and which in the future will limit free trade even more.

We repeat again our feelings in favour of the urgent restoration to the People's Republic of China of its rights in the United Nations. The exclusion of the People's Republic of China is more than absurd; its exclusion from Assembly matters jeopardizes the effective implementation of any international agreements which might be arrived at in the Assembly.

We wish to contribute to the utmost to accelerating the implementation of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

Together with the other voices that have been raised in this Assembly, and specifically because we are exceptional eye-witnesses of what military intervention can be, we urge the withdrawal of foreign troops.

(At this point there was an interruption from the public gallery).

When all is said and done, interruptions of that nature do not really disturb us. Lately, during the last few days of my sojourn in this country, we have been victims of this type of interruption. This merely gives us even greater proof of the fact that this is a country in which sufficient guarantees are not offered to the Organization to ensure its functioning.

The PRESIDENT: If this kind of demonstration continues, I may have to direct that the galleries be cleared of all visitors. Will the President of Cuba kindly proceed.

His Excellency Dr. Osvaldo Dorticós (President of the Republic of Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I shall endeavour to continue, because, of course, what has to be said here by us will be said. I repeat, we insist on the withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea and from South Viet Nam.

(At this point there was an interruption from the public gallery).

May I ask to be allowed to continue.

The PRESIDENT: At the very next interruption, I shall adjourn the Assembly for five minutes until all the visitors are cleared from the galleries.

His Excellency Dr. Osvaldo Dorticós (President of the Republic of Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): May I continue now?

These are matters that concern you all; these are questions that are closely tied to the problems of peace and war. Whenever we are given the opportunity, and in keeping with these general outlines I have just given you, the delegation of Cuba will make known its views clearly and with the firm conviction of the principles on which we stand.

These are not the only problems which today jeopardize world peace. We have appeared before the United Nations specifically because surrounding the so-called Cuban problem or question, there is being created a series of circumstances and an entire atmosphere that, despite our will and despite our determination, transformed this question, or endeavours to transform it, into a case which implies or carries within it the threat of war. That is why I think it is appropriate for me, with a knowledge based on facts and without speculations that are marginal to the events of recent history and of the present day, to put before you exactly what the Cuban situation is and what is the clear-cut position of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba. First and foremost, let me recall the following.

(resident Dorticós)

Today it is said that Cuba constitutes a threat to peace on the American continent because, in accordance with its Marxist-Leninist orientation, it promotes subversion. And this is taken up and made into the basic and fundamental question.

I repeat that it is well to recall that the tense situation existing with relation to my country -- that is, the tense situation existing between the United States and Cuba -- began a long time before our revolutionary process required the socialist characteristics which it displays today.

The promulgation of our laws affecting the interests of the North American monopolies in our country and the promulgation of the agrarian reform law at a stage in our revolutionary development that was not yet in conformity with the principles of socialism -- these sufficed to bring about the start of the aggressive actions against our country on the part of the Government of the United States. Then began the series of insolent diplomatic notes and the rhetorical incursions into the air-space over our territory. These were closely followed by the cutting of the sugar quota on the North American market and the discontinuance of the supply of oil to our country together with diplomatic activities aimed at the isolation of Cuba in the continent. In a word, there is a whole series of pointedly aggressive actions which gave rise to the present state of tension -- I repeat -- long before we proclaimed the socialist character of our revolution.

And what happened thereafter?

I believe it would tax your patience unduly if I were to rehearse the list of North American aggressions against Cuba. I think it is sufficient to mention all the attempts made to create subversion in our country, the acts of sabotage, the attacks against individuals and the espionage activities on our soil. And finally, it is sufficient to recall to this Assembly the armed invasion of our country by mercenary forces militarily financed, militarily trained and militarily protected and directed by the Government of the United States -- the invasion at Playa Girón.

And after Playa Girón, after that fiasco, that ridiculous event, what happened? Did they perhaps learn the great lesson of history? Did they show an

(President Dorticos)

awareness and a knowledge of the tremendous power of a people firm in its determination to achieve liberation and independence? No, they did not. We were immediately made the victims of new aggressions, of infiltrations, along our coastline, by agents trained by the Central Intelligence Agency. There were new attempts at sabotage; there was the military training of groups to carry out the subversion within our country that had not yet been achieved; there was an intensification of economic pressure on our country -- a weapon which, moreover, has been stubbornly and persistently wielded in the hope that economic pressure can bring about a failure of the revolution in our country, and consequently the achievement of the sole objective sought, that is the overthrow of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba.

Despite the fact that they cut us off from participation in the North American sugar market, despite the fact that they cut off our supply of oil, despite the fact that they completely and finally severed trade relations between our country and the United States, hoping thereby to bring about the collapse of our economy, we can nevertheless appear today before this Assembly of the United Nations, and we could also take a great deal of time listing all the successes which we have already achieved in our economic development, successes which are easy to see and which constitute ...

(At this point there was an interruption from the public gallery.)

With all due respect, Mr. President, may I request a guarantee that I shall be allowed to continue speaking.

The PRESIDENT: I request the President to continue. Nobody can give a guarantee that someone may not behave foolishly, but we shall take every precaution to see that the President is not unduly interrupted.

His Excellency Dr. Osvaldo DORTICOS (President of the Republic of Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I will lose neither my calm nor my patience.

As I was saying, we can today proudly point out before the United Nations a long list of economic achievements. We can point to an industry criminally deprived of its supply of spare parts but nevertheless able to show today, in so short a time and in the face of all the difficulties, a growth of 7 per cent,

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(President Dorticos)

except in the sugar industry. We can point to our agricultural development and to the organization and planning of our economy, promising a balanced and accelerated growth in the near future directed fundamentally to the achievement of national self-sufficiency.

(President Lorticos)

The setting up and creation of exportable reserves to be ploughed into our agriculture, the development of our international trade, and the obviously necessary preliminary stages that will lead to a later industrial development, will entirely transform the characteristics and the structure of our under-developed industries. And hand in hand with this there are measures of health improvement that are a privilege in this continent, and there are fundamental achievements in our educational policies. It is these, along with other things, that allow us today, with pride and with deep-felt satisfaction, to say that on this continent, so filled with uneducated people, this continent of countries with alarming statistics of illiteracy, Cuba today, because of its revolution, is without illiterates. But we have had to carry this out beset at every step by multiple aggressions, and the very campaign against illiteracy in our country in itself, in its development, in its growth, had to go through some painful and dramatic moments because the counter-revolutionary bands, organized and supplied by the Government of the United States, went so far as to murder teachers, young men, or students who are teaching, who had gone out to our fields to wipe out the scourge of illiteracy among our peasants.

All this progress, all this advance -- which I think warrants the support and applause of those who may have differing ideological viewpoints from ourselves -- all this success, and the enemies' failures, have also not taught the great lesson. The aggressions continued; the provocations continued; the training of counter-revolutionary groups on North American soil and on the soil of Caribbean countries continued; the provocations coming from the American naval base that is still rooted in our country continued, and the violation of the territorial waters and the airspace of my country continued. Because of lack of time, it would be impossible for me to narrate all these violations. They shall however be distributed to Members of the Assembly. But, those aggressions continue and the American warships continue bordering the coast of our ports, and those of us who live in Havana daily have to see with our own eyes those warships lurking around our island, with their warlike aspect, and if not warlike as yet at least with the aspect of preparing for war.

(President Fortresses)

This is the present picture, but we can add that the present situation is qualitatively different from that which existed prior to the invasion of our country on Playa Girón. I say that qualitatively speaking it is different, for the following reason: Prior to Playa Girón, the Government of the United States more than once stated that it had no aggressive intentions against my country. Naturally after Playa Girón, the President of the United States himself had publicly and officially to recognize his responsibility; he had to recognize his participation in that invasion. And today the situation is different because although it is true that we are being told again and again -- and the head of the United States delegation here in the Assembly stated it -- that there is no intention to attack my country -- there is, on the other hand, a precedent; there is a background of literature, official declarations and official resolutions which authorize and anticipatedly legitimize armed aggression against Cuba. And the idea, as we read it in the text of a declaration of the United States State Department, the guiding motive of the foreign policy of the United States regarding Cuba is clearly and obviously that of overthrowing the Revolutionary Government of Cuba and destroying our glorious revolution and its fruits.

This is taking place in the middle of, and surrounded by, a press, radio and television campaign that fills the political stage of the United States with a warlike hysteria. Together with this, there are the reiterated and insolent and insulting statements made by Senators and Representatives of the United States. The most whole-hearted use is being made, in the most absurd fashion, of all circumstances in order to feed this campaign of aggressive hysteria against our country, until it culminates for example in the ridiculous statement that the establishment in our territory of a fishing port, following on friendly and amicable relations with the Soviet Union, also implies a threat of armed aggression which jeopardizes the security of the United States itself, so much so that they are raising to the level of a threat of war the use of codfish and herrings.

(President Forticas)

We know that this atmosphere of hysteria, this campaign, this interminable series of slander and libel are part and parcel of pressures being exerted by the United States Government -- and on it, too -- so that once and for all there will be a decision taken for armed aggression, direct armed aggression, against my country. We know that these pressures exist. But we also believe that, when all is said and done, it is the United States Government itself that is responsible for the existence of these pressures, which are the inevitable corollary, the unavoidable result, of the policy of constant and permanent aggression and harassment that the United States Government has followed since the new Administration took over in this country.

Everyone can see and watch the manoeuvres, the activities that are being carried out under the tutelage of this climate of anti-Cuban hysteria and aggression.

For example, not in the United Nations, but with obvious contempt for the United Nations, an invitation is sent out to the Foreign Ministers of Latin America to meet at the State Department. They are invited to conspire, to join in the domestic subversion of my country. Once again, the so-called inter-American system is wielded, that system which the United States Government itself has been good enough to disdain. Why was the system not invoked at the time of the aggression? Why was the system sidestepped at the time of the invasion of Playa de Girón? Doubtless the same system will also be overlooked in the case of a new armed aggression against my country.

We have noticed that the Secretary of State of the United States is not very present at the United Nations. He has not shown any concern for disarmament, peace and tranquility. He has been outside our Organization, taken up with his work of subversion, of conspiracy against my country.

We also know full well that at the meeting of Latin American Foreign Ministers respectable representatives of countries of Latin America, despite their ideological differences with our revolution, defended the principles of non-intervention and the self-determination of peoples. From this rostrum I praise some of those Foreign Ministers. I challenge them to tell us what was discussed at that meeting, and what was discussed outside the meeting, too, so that one and all may know that it is not Cuba that is upsetting peace in this

(President Porticus)

continent; it is not Cuba that is attacking sister republics; but it is Cuba that is the victim and doubtless will be the next victim of interference and new aggression and new obstacles to its development.

Outside the Organization of American States, and without consulting any of the international bodies, showing contempt for one and all, the United States Government takes unilateral decisions and continues to engage in activities which flagrantly flout and violate the principles of the United Nations Charter. On the one hand, there is the policy of the Alliance for Progress, a policy of opportunism that is set up in this continent only because of and in view of the example of the Cuban revolution. On the one hand, a decision is proclaimed to support the development of the backward countries because of and in view of the case of Cuba, which also has an underdeveloped economy, whose people are filled with aspirations for economic development and cultural development. On the other hand, there is an entire policy of creating economic difficulties, of trying to stifle and strangle the forces of the revolutionary Government of Cuba. And to all that has been done are added these official decisions -- officially proclaimed -- to use coercion and reprisals against any shipping firms whose ships carry any cargo to supply and feed the Cuban people: raw materials for our industries, fertilizers and tools for our land. Reprisals and coercion are used to force a naval blockade of our island. In full daylight, openly, pressures are exercised on the countries of NATO to make them stop their ships from carrying cargo to our country.

And if that is unsuccessful there is still another tool: reprisals against ships that do carry cargo to my country, even to the detriment of the interests of shipping firms flying flags of countries friendly to the United States.

This, in the first place, is the most obvious and tacit confession of failure on the part of those who predicted the economic collapse of Cuba. It was said that because of the historic roads that our revolution was following, our country would be led to hunger, famine and disaster. The fact that they now have to use these manoeuvres, these reprisals, this repression, to cut off maritime trade with Cuba proves that those predictions were wrong. Now they have to destroy the Cuban revolution by the artificial establishment of economic difficulties, fully aware as they must be and are that the economic development

of my country depends, and will depend for a long time, on the strengthening and expansion of our trade relations with other countries.

This pressure for blockades, this carrying out of unilateral acts to force blockades: I ask myself, and I ask you, gentlemen, whether in a time of peace these are or are not acts of war? I ask you, gentlemen, whether the United States Government is entitled or empowered -- outside this international Organization, showing its contempt for this Organization -- to take such unilateral decisions with such repercussions?

(President Lorticos)

I ask you whether this can be made to jibe with the purposes of improving and widening international relations that led ultimately to the setting up and establishment of the United Nations. I ask and I wonder whether the United Nations can impassively watch such events take place. And I wonder and I ask whether this blockade against my country is or is not an act of war, preparatory to war, facilitating war, and whether, in view of this fact and event, the United Nations can remain silent. Cuba asks the condemnation of such aggressive acts, a condemnation from the United Nations.

The guiding principles of the freedom of trade are attacked. But these principles are an ancient victory of mankind. Naturally, no one would dare to submit to an international organization the right to exercise a duty or a privilege that is not theirs. Without such a right, without such privilege, they act as though they had it -- and naturally, this being the case, the representative of the United States has not brought this matter up to the Assembly. But it is our responsibility, it is our duty, to refer to it -- to violation of the principles guaranteeing freedom of international trade and commerce, the carrying out of an act of war in times of peace, and the absurd and haughty adoption of measures of this nature by a great country against a small nation.

But these efforts will fail again, as they failed in the past. Cuba does not stand alone. Cuba has friends. It has the international solidarity of peoples. And Cuba has friendly Governments on its side, and they will allow Cuba to enjoy international trade.

But this is not all. There is something on which I emphatically must dwell and draw the attention of the Assembly. I said at the beginning of my statement that the state of United States-Cuban relations prior to the invasion of Playa Girón was different, qualitatively speaking, from what it is today. And I said this because now official declarations and resolutions have been made known, vainly and anticipatedly pending to legitimize direct armed aggression against my country. You all have before you the joint resolution of the American Congress. To understand this, you need merely glance through the operative part of that joint resolution, as approved by the Congress of the United States. I quote the document:

(President Barticos)

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that the United States is determined

"(a) To prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms -- "

I repeat that: "including the use of arms" --

"the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending by force or threat of force its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere;"

This is most bizarre. We can only turn to recent history. Was it perhaps Cuba that carried out aggressive or subversive activities against other countries of this hemisphere? No, it was quite the contrary. Cast your minds back for one moment and recall the invasion of Playa Giron, supported and organized, as President Kennedy himself admitted, by the Government of the United States. The mercenary troops were trained in a Central American country, and these troops set forth to invade another American nation. Was it Cuba that carried out subversive activities in this hemisphere, or was it rather these other Governments which, in one way or another, supported that invasion? In so doing, in committing this international crime, they were guilty of it. Cuba said in the past, and repeats it here, that we do not intend to carry out, nor shall we ever carry out, any activities extending the ideology of our own revolutionary process to any other countries or parts of this hemisphere.

But let us go back to this joint resolution of the United States of America in Congress assembled. In its third operative paragraph, it says:

"To work with the Organization of American States and with freedom-loving Cubans -- "

and may I enter a parenthesis here: Cuban counter-revolutionaries --

"to support the aspirations of the Cuban people for self-determination."

Let us see what this means. Does it mean: to continue to support the subversive and aggressive activities against our country; to finance, to protect, to cover new piratical incursions on our shores; to finance and militarily to cover and protect new armed aggression against our country?

(President Dorticos)

This paragraph of the resolution adopted by the United States of America in Congress assembled is the official, categorical, open statement of the decision of that country to interfere in the domestic affairs of my country, thus given the light of day public and officially by the Congress of the United States of America and declared so, for absurd contradiction, within the same resolution in which Cuba is accused of being guilty of upsetting peace on this continent.

(President Martines)

In sub-paragraph(b) of this joint resolution the Congress of the United States of America states that it is determined:

"To prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States".

In other words, the Congress of the United States a priori legitimizes the use of weapons, legitimizes armed aggression, against my country to prevent the setting up in Cuba of a military capacity which might endanger the security of the United States. Cuba endangering the security of a great power -- Cuba, the victim of aggression, Cuba, the invaded country. This country, Cuba, fills the leaders of this great Power with panic, and their hearts tremble. I do not think I need to stress to you, gentlemen, the ludicrous nature of such a declaration.

Because of this joint resolution passed by the Congress of the United States -- I have heard a representative describe it as a reply to the problem of Cuba -- the United States Government is calling up reservists and intends to train Cuban contingents, within the regular United States army, to be used against the Cuban Government. That, according to the joint resolution, is because of the danger that Cuba represents -- because Cuba could become militarily capable of endangering and upsetting the peaceful daily life of the American people, and of endangering the security of this great Power.

What can we say about this? We can say that Cuba has armed itself. We have a right to arm ourselves, to defend ourselves, and the question that must be asked is, "Why has Cuba armed itself?". It is undeniable that we would have preferred to have channeled all those human and material resources, and all the energies that we have had to expend in the strengthening of our military defence, towards the development of our economy and the growth of our culture. We have armed ourselves against our will, against our better nature, because we were forced to. We were forced to strengthen our military defences. Otherwise we should be jeopardizing and undermining the sovereignty of our country and its independence. We have armed because the Cuban people has the legitimate right, given to it by history itself, to defend its sovereign decisions and to lead its

(President Dorticos)

country down the historic roads which, in the exercise of its sovereignty, it has chosen for itself. And I ask you gentlemen -- you do not have to answer me, but can answer sincerely within your heart of hearts -- what would have happened, had we not strengthened our military defences, when a division armed and trained by the United States Government invaded our country at Playa Girón. Obviously, our revolution would not have been overthrown. Our historic movement would not have been stopped. But it would have been a long and bloody fight. Many more human lives would have been lost, and much more material wealth would have been destroyed.

We wiped out that invasion within the space of seventy-two hours. We repelled that haughty and unjustifiable aggression against our country in seventy-two hours because we had exercised in time our right to strengthen our military capacity for defence, in order, as I have said, to safeguard our sovereign independence and our revolution.

That is why we armed. We still hope that we shall be able to throw all these weapons overboard. We are a peace-loving nation; we want peace; we do not want war. The people of Cuba has only one desire -- to achieve great conquests in the development of its nation's future, but to do so by peaceful work, by creative labour.

We were forced to arm -- not to attack anyone, not to assault any nation, but only to defend ourselves. And to the joint resolution of the American Congress we replied in due course with a declaration, agreed to by our own Council of Ministers, which says in its pertinent paragraphs:

"Were the United States able to give Cuba effective guarantees and satisfactory proof concerning the integrity of Cuban territory, and were it to cease its subversive and counter-revolutionary activities against our people, then Cuba would not have to strengthen its defences. Cuba would not even need an army, and all the resources that are used for this would be gratefully and happily invested in the economic and cultural development of the country."

Were the United States able to give us proof, by word and deed, that it would not carry out aggression against our country, then, we declare solemnly before you here and now, our weapons would be unnecessary and our army redundant. We believe ourselves able to create peace.

(President Lorticos)

Furthermore, we are not obliged by anyone or anything to explain to the Congress of the United Nations what we do to defend our territorial integrity. We arm in whatever way we deem it necessary to do so in order to defend our nation, not to attack anyone. I repeat, we do not have to render an account to any Power or to any foreign congress. While the dramatic circumstances require it, we shall continue to strengthen our military defence, to defend ourselves, not to attack anyone. If we are attacked, the enemy will meet the resistance of our weapons; but, at the same time, he will meet the resistance of our patriotism.

Obviously, the most serious point in this resolution of the United States Congress is that it takes upon itself the so-called right unilaterally to decide when, in its opinion, these conditions set forth in the joint resolution have been fulfilled, at which time the United States will be able to carry out what previously was made legitimate, namely, aggression against my country. And this is a matter of grave concern because, according to the resolution, it is sufficient for the United States Government to declare that one of these conditions has been fulfilled for it to feel empowered to attack us directly through armed aggression.

Surely this constitutes unheard of contempt for international law surely this is a barefaced flaunting of an international organization; surely this is a violation of the United Nations itself. By this artificial means, pretexts for aggression are prefabricated and a pretext for aggression is drawn from the supposed possibility that, by armed force, Cuba may try to take over the territory at present occupied by the United States military base at Guantanamo. We have stated more than once, and we repeat, our right to recover that territory. That region was torn from us by force following an American incursion. International conferences, such as the Belgrade Conference, fully recognized and expressly stated the right of the Cuban Government to recover that territory. We know what that military and naval base is for today. It is to recruit and train counter-revolutionaries, to undertake acts of provocation against our frontier posts, to offend and insult our citizens, to infiltrate agents of conspiracy, espionage and subversion into our territory.

Once more I take this opportunity of reiterating to this Assembly that we shall exercise our right in due course, but we shall not do so by means of armed

(President Portia)

force. We shall exercise that right when we deem it appropriate through the procedural channels of international law and before the international bodies competent to deal with such a claim. We shall not make a gift to the United States of a pretext for aggression. We hope that this will be a controversy which will one day be settled by peaceful means, but until that day dawns, and while we wait for the moment to exercise that right in accordance with international law, we denounce from this rostrum any effort to use as a pretext for aggression any provocative act emanating from the Guantanamo base.

Where do we stand in the face of this aggressive conduct? From the beginning of the deterioration in Cuban-United States relations, Cuba has constantly been ready to negotiate, to negotiate through normal diplomatic channels or by any other adequate means, to negotiate the differences between the United States and Cuba. As our Council of Ministers stated in its declaration, Cuba was even prepared to indemnify American citizens and interests that might have been affected by the laws of the revolution, had it not been for the economic aggression, had the Government of the United States been ready to negotiate on a level commensurate with the sovereignty, dignity and independence of our people. Our eagerness for a negotiated peaceful settlement was published many times; it was included in official notes sent to the United States Government. Our purpose and our willingness to negotiate were clearly stated. The repeated refusals of the United States Government to negotiate proved conclusively that it had one single aim, namely, the overthrow of the Revolutionary Government of my country, the destruction of the Cuban Revolution and interference in the exercise of self-determination by our people.

(President Dorticos)

When there was a change of Administration in the United States, when President Kennedy assumed the Presidency, we again reiterated our willingness to solve by peaceful means the situation of tension that existed. The replies to these words and the answer to those offers of peace were very clear. They were embodied in the continuation of the aggressive policy of the previous Administration, the aggression against and the invasion of our country and the carrying out by the present Government, as President Kennedy recognized, of the plans of aggression and invasion of Cuba that had been drawn up by the previous Administration.

Cuba sought peace, but the United States wished for war. But there are times when one turns a deaf ear to the lessons of history and the lesson of Playa Girón. After that failure and fiasco that so greatly undermined the prestige of those who were just undertaking the responsibilities of power, the aggressions continued and the refusals to negotiate were repeated. The situation today is the lamentable consequence of that stubbornness, pride and arrogance of those who had aggressive intentions against my country.

Cuba, and I say this clearly, has been ready and is ready to do everything we deem useful to lighten the tension that surrounds Cuban-American relations and that threatens world peace. Since Cuba is ready to do this, so we have a moral right to challenge the delegation of the United States Government to tell us whether that Government is equally ready to take the necessary and useful steps to overcome the present international tension which surrounds Cuba. Unfortunately, we are pessimistic, and we can anticipate the answer that will be given to us with regard to those steps towards peace, those steps which we are ready to take and which we request the United States Government to take, or, rather, we ask the United States Government if it is ready to take those steps. Unfortunately, and you can stand as witnesses, those steps will not be taken.

We would like those steps to be taken. We are lovers of peace and we wish to work and to accelerate the progress of our country. We do not want war; we do not want to fight, but we have to follow the lead of patriotism, of serenity and of the responsibilities of the leaders. Unfortunately, the road followed by the United States of America is not this. Their road is the road of arrogance, hunger for domination and panic in the light of the Cuban revolution.

(President Portico)

Cuba is not an aggressive country; it is a peace-loving nation. Cuba does not possess any monopolies devoted to the manufacture of weapons, and, therefore, so far as our country is concerned, war is a bad business. We in Cuba do not want war; we want peace. Cuba wants to live in peace and in friendship with all the countries of this continent and, indeed, with all the countries of this planet. We would have liked to have lived at peace with the United States, yet, despite that desire, we have had to live in constant vigilance, constantly on the alert and with our weapons at the ready, with our fighters awake, ready at any and every moment to work creatively and in peace, but, by the same token, awake and alert for the armed strife which we do not seek but which, if it becomes inevitable, we shall confront with the historic courage of our people.

It has been very often stated here that Cuba is not a bone of contention between the East and the West. Cuba is a problem of sovereignty and independence. The problem of Cuba is a question of the sovereign decision of a people and the right of that people to self-determination. Cuba does not wish to add its name to the roster of those involved in the cold war. Cuba only wishes to develop its economy and advance its culture and to plan and carry out a good future in peace.

Cuba is ready at any moment to prove its aims, and if it be true that there is no intention to attack our country, and if we can believe that to be a fact, then in this Assembly we urge the head of the United States delegation to be good enough to stand here and give us true guarantees that his Government does not intend to attack Cuba. But we urge him to give us these guarantees not only in words, but, over and above all, with deeds, guarantees of words were offered to us before Playa Girón.

When the invasion took place, many of you here heard the representative of the Government of the United States declare that such an invasion had not taken place, that it did not exist and that his Government had not sponsored that invasion. Yet, after a few days, the President of the United States of America himself publicly and officially assumed the responsibility for that invasion. Therefore, because of the past, we have a perfect right in the United Nations to ask for guarantees of non-aggression, but, as I said before, not the guarantee of words but, over and above all, guarantees strengthened by deeds.

(President Dorticos)

Let us not be told that the problem of Cuba is not a bilateral difference between Cuba and the United States, that Cuba is really a problem of the Hemisphere. We have said before and we have repeated, and we repeat once more, that we respect the principle of non-intervention. We have always proclaimed our respect for the sovereignty and independence of the rest of the countries of Latin America. Cuba is not a problem of this continent or of this Hemisphere. Under-development is a Hemisphere problem; we are not a Hemisphere problem. Hunger, famine, need are Hemisphere problems, but Cuba is not. Lack of education and illiteracy are Hemisphere problems, not Cuba. United States interference in the domestic affairs of the countries of this continent is a Hemisphere problem, not Cuba. The training and preparation of armed forces, specifically on the part of the Government of the United States, in various countries of this continent to be used in the suppression of popular movements in the continent until the danger of a new colonial war has been controlled in the Americas -- this is a Hemisphere problem, not Cuba.

Cuba is not a Hemisphere problem; the United States is, because of its lack of respect for the sovereignty of other States. Cuba is no problem for the countries which respect it. Cuba can be a problem only for those Governments which fear it -- not our capacity for subversion or for hypothetical aggressive intentions, but only the example of the Cuban Revolution.

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba, as was stated in the decision of the Council of Ministers of Cuba, once more affirms that the foreign policy of our country is based on the principle of non-intervention, on the right to self-determination of all nations, on recognition of the sovereign equality of States, on freedom of trade, on the settling through negotiation of international disputes, and on the will to live peacefully with all peoples of the world.

Faithful to these principles of its international policy and to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, Cuba constitutes a danger to the security of no nation whatsoever of our continent, nor has Cuba harboured, in the past or at the present time, any aggressive intentions against any of them. Rather have we shown the greatest and most absolute respect for the policy of non-intervention, convinced as we are, and as demonstrated by our own national history, that it is up to each and every people to decide, in its sovereignty and without the hateful interference of foreign countries, its own historic destiny.

(President Dorticos)

Cuba, far from having violated this norm of international conduct, has, on the contrary, since our revolution, with all the loss of riches and of lives that so unhappily accompanied it, been the victim constantly of interference in its internal affairs and aggressions from the territory of other countries of the continent, not only the United States but also several Latin American countries whose Governments, admittedly or with concealment, have joined the chorus of imperialist defamation led by the Government of the United States, thus turning deaf ears to the genuine sentiments of their respective peoples.

That is our policy: a policy of peace and coexistence, imbued with the firm and profound desire to enjoy the best possible relations with all nations of this continent.

But if, in spite of this fact, we are attacked, we will defend ourselves. I repeat, we have sufficient means with which to defend ourselves; we have indeed our inevitable weapons, the weapons which we would have preferred not to acquire and which we do not wish to employ. Moreover, we can count on the unyielding patriotism of our people and we can count also -- and history here has offered us eloquent proof enough -- on the solidarity of peoples. We can rely with satisfaction on friendly countries and Governments firm in solidarity and ready to defend the right of Cuba to independence and to safeguard the integrity of its territory.

From the bottom of our hearts we wish to see no past error committed again. We sincerely hope that the Government of the United States will make no new mistake. If it learned no lesson from Playa Girón, let it at least pause in its haughty march and listen to the loud voice of international wisdom. But if such an error is again made, then despite ourselves and against our wishes we warn the United Nations Organization right now of our determination to fight. If they make the mistake, we give warning that the aggression against Cuba, despite ourselves and against our every desire, can become transformed, as has been pointed out here, into the start of a new world war.

(President Portocarrero)

We hope and trust that that will not occur. We hope and trust that that error will not be committed. We hope and trust this because we are concerned, concerned not only for the destiny of our people but for the destiny of all mankind. We do believe in the sincerity and in the value of international solidarity, and that is why we believe in the sincerity and in the value of those statements of solidarity that have been made by the Government of the Soviet Union.

If the Government of the United States does not believe it, it is because it does not understand what a policy founded upon principles is. We have faith in principles; we believe in principles, we fight under the aegis of principles and we direct all our work and all our creative labour towards principles. We believe in principles, and that is why we believe in the solidarity I have referred to. We do not want the mistake to be repeated; we want peace. I repeat here we are ready to take any useful step towards the guaranteeing of peace. We can only point out the possible ramifications for the United Nations of the dangers we have gone through. Our position is this, and it is very clear -- we are ready to do what is necessary to achieve peace, but if once again arrogance, the greed for domination, or fear of the hemispheric example to be drawn from the Cuban revolution dictates an error to the American Government, the people of Cuba, ready as always to live in peace, is also ready to fight with weapons for its independence.

That is our position. The press and the radio of this country have taken it upon themselves during the last few hours to prophesy that we shall receive answers from the delegation of the United States: We know that in the United Nations this is not usual because of the function and the position I occupy in my country, but I am not worried about that. We really do not care who has the last word in this General Assembly. We really do not care who rises last to address the Assembly; the last word will be spoken by history in the future. The people of Cuba trusts that future and relies on the history that will be written, because for the first time it is the people of Cuba who, in entire freedom, are forging their own history.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the President of Cuba for his address. Despite certain regrettable attempts at interruption, the Assembly has listened with attention to the address and I have no doubt will draw from it such guidance as it may be capable of yielding with reference to the subjects which the Assembly will be called upon to consider. I shall now, with the Acting Secretary-General, accompany His Excellency the President of the Republic of Cuba from the hall, and the meeting is suspended for the few minutes I shall be absent until I return to the Chair, when the Assembly will resume the general debate.

The meeting was suspended at 12.30 p.m. and resumed at 12.35 p.m.

Agenda Item 9

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will resume the General Debate. I recognize the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. STEVENSON (United States of America) (from the floor): Point of order.

The PRESIDENT: The representative of the United States has asked to speak on a point of order. I now recognize the representative of the United States.

Mr. STEVENSON (United States of America): I have asked to speak on a point of order. For seventeen years we have come to expect that when a Chief of State asks for the privilege of this podium, he has an obligation not to abuse it and not to demean the United Nations and the dialogue of diplomacy, but to speak here in a constructive and a statesmanlike manner. But the President of Cuba, speaking as Chief of State on a ceremonial occasion, has seen fit to use this rostrum to attack my country, with unparalleled calumnies, slanders and misrepresentations, for one hour and forty-five minutes. Yet I will not claim a right of reply from this platform this morning. Instead, I shall respond to his intemperate and false charges outside of this hall and at once, and with your permission, Mr. President, I will have my response placed before the Members of the General Assembly in printed form during the day.

The traditions of etiquette and of good taste which have been established here have built respect for this Organization, and for my part I do not want to descend even by reply to the levels of the Chief of State we have just heard here on this ceremonial occasion. He is right however on one point: The last word will be written by history.

Mr. SHEARER (Jamaica): Mr. President, it is a pleasure on this first occasion on which I have the privilege of addressing this Assembly to offer my sincere congratulations on your unanimous election to the Presidency of the seventeenth session of the General Assembly. The progress already made in the

EXTRACT FOLLOWS

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Doctides Speech Before UN (October 8, 1962)

(Reference to Joint Congressional Resolution)

"That is to say, the US Congress legitimizes in advance the use of arms, armed aggression against our country in order to prevent in our territory the creation or the use of a military capability which places the security of the US in danger.

"Cuba, placing the security of the great power in danger! Cuba, the aggrieved, Cuba the invaded, fills the leaders of that great power with panic?"

"I believe that it is unnecessary to underscore the ridiculousness and the absurd character of this declaration before the Delegates.

"...This (referring to 150,000 call-up), according to the Joint Resolution, because of the danger that Cuba signifies a military power capable of altering the peaceful daily life of the American people and endangering the security of that great power.

"With respect to this, what do we say? We say, Delegates, ~~there is no doubt~~ that yes, Cuba has armed! It has the right to arm and defend itself."

(The rest continues along the line of Cuba's legitimate and sovereign right to improve its military defenses.)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by DATE 5/19/88
☒ RELEASE ☐ DECLASSIFY
☐ EXCISE ☐ DECLASSIFY in PART
☐ DENY ☐ Non-responsive info.
 FOI, EO or PA exemptions:
 AUTHORITY TO:
☐ CLASSIFY as: OADR
☐ DOWNGRADE TO: OADR

REPRODUCED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE